

Background and Planning Evaluation

Background and Site Context

The proposed development is located in the northwest community of Hillhurst, on the north side of Gladstone Road NW and west side of 10 Street NW. The subject site has an area of approximately 0.37 hectares (0.91 acres).

The site consists of five parcels which are currently developed with three apartment buildings, which were constructed in 1964. It also includes the historic Hillhurst Baptist Church, which has most recently been used as a commercial space. There are rear lanes along the northern and western boundaries of the site. To the south is multi-residential development while low-density residential development is located to the west and north of the site. The eastern edge of the site flanks the 10 Street NW Neighbourhood Main Street.

The Sunnyside LRT Station is 150 metres (three-minute walk) from the subject site. Cycle tracks and bicycle lanes along 10 Street NW, 5 Avenue NW and 9A Street NW provide active transportation connectivity to the site. The 10 Street NW Main Street provides local commercial services and amenities. In terms of parks and open space, Riley Park is 100 metres to the north while McHugh Bluff is 300 metres to the northeast of the subject site.

A land use amendment for the subject site was approved by Council 2021 July 26. The land use is a Direct Control (DC) District (Bylaw [121D2021](#)), which is based on the Mixed Use – General (MU-1) District. Through the land use, the Hillhurst Baptist Church was registered as a Municipal Historic Resource. This designation allows the density of the development to be increased from a floor area ratio of 2.0 to a floor area ratio of 4.0, which is enabled by bonus density policies in Part 2, section 3.1.5 of the *Hillhurst/Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP)*.

Community Peak Population Table

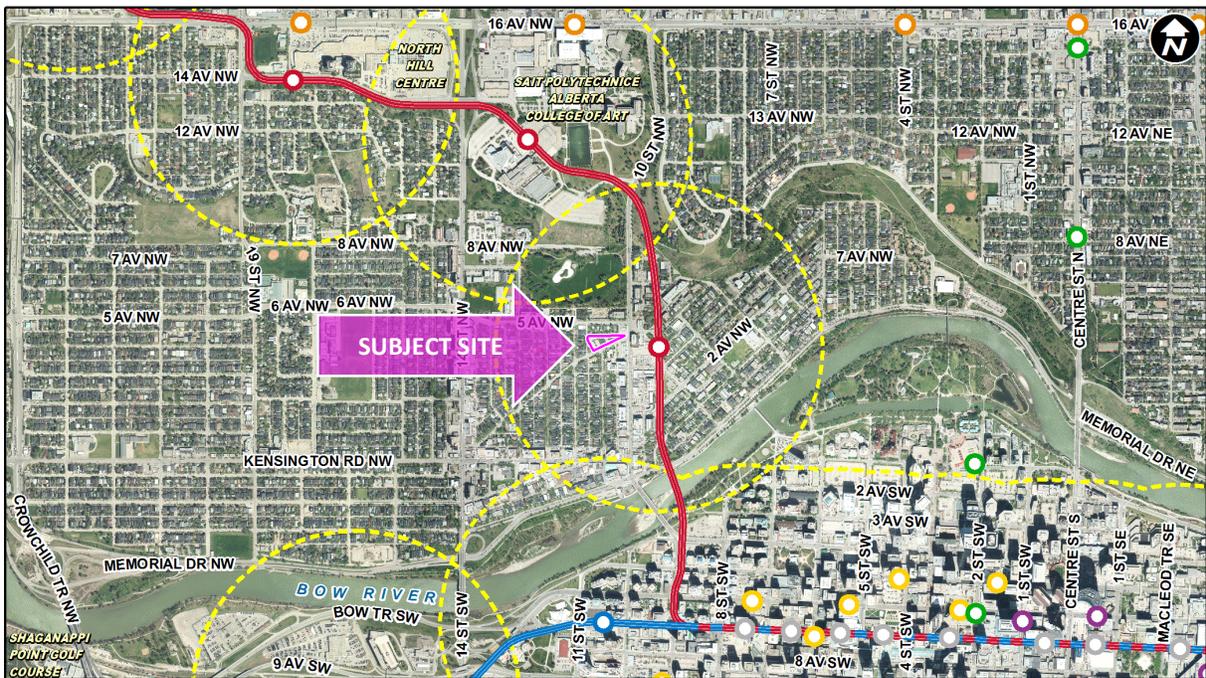
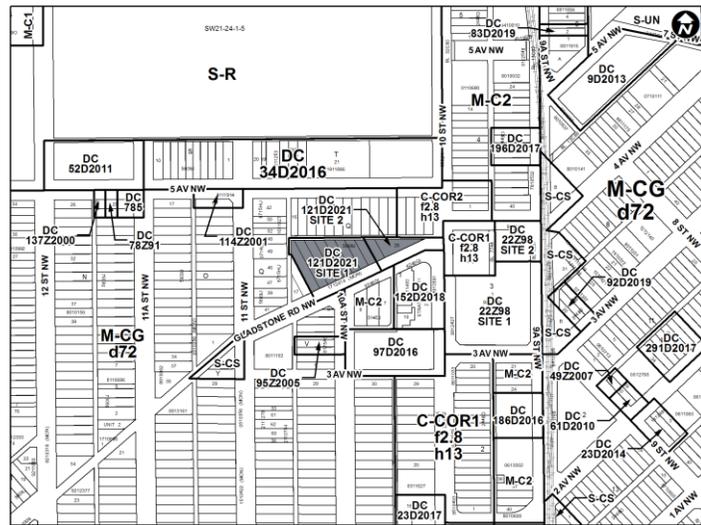
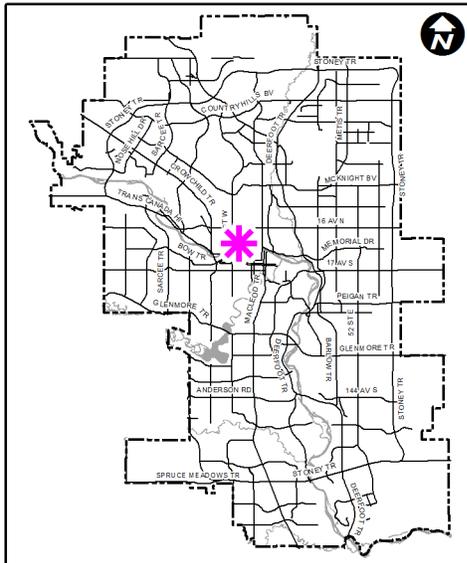
As identified below, the community of Hillhurst reached its peak population in 2015.

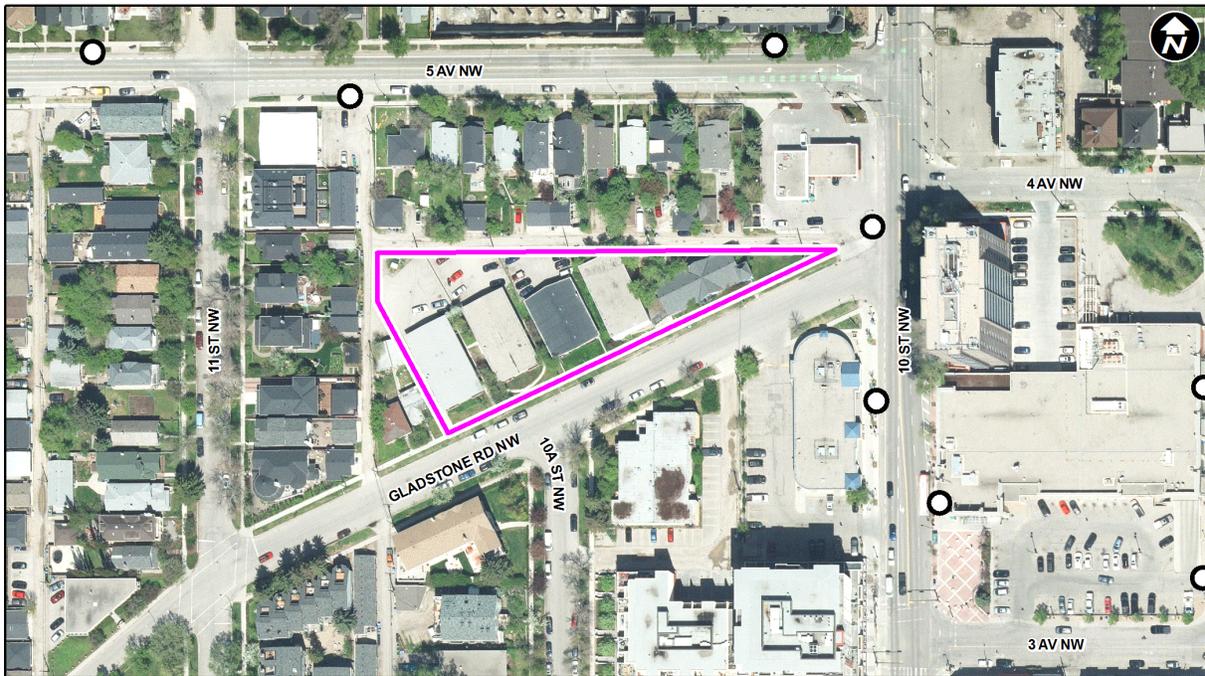
Hillhurst	
Peak Population Year	2015
Peak Population	6,737
2019 Current Population	6,558
Difference in Population (Number)	-179
Difference in Population (Percent)	-2.7%

Source: *The City of Calgary 2019 Civic Census*

Additional demographic and socio-economic information may be obtained online through the [Hillhurst Community Profile](#).

Location Maps





Previous Council Direction

Following the 2021 July 26 Public Hearing for the land use amendment (LOC2020-0122) on the subject site, Council adopted a Motion Arising directing “that the development permit application come back through the Calgary Planning Commission for review”.

Planning Evaluation

Land Use

The subject site is designated as a DC District (Bylaw [121D2021](#)) and is based on the Mixed Use - General (MU-1) District. The DC District sets a maximum building height of 20 metres and a base floor area ratio of 2.0, which can be increased to 4.0 with Municipal Historic Designation of the Hillhurst Baptist Church. This method for achieving additional density is outlined in Part 2, section 3.1.5 of the *Hillhurst/Sunnyside ARP*.

The DC District allows street-oriented developments with opportunities for a mix of residential and at-grade commercial uses and provides compatible transition with surrounding developments. Building stepback requirements were written into the land use district to address the unique shape and context of the site and are required in locations where the building is oriented toward low-density residential development, with the intent of reducing the perceived mass of the building as it builds towards the low-density areas. This translates to building stepbacks above the fifth storey along the north and west elevations of the building, while specifically at the northwest corner of the building, stepbacks are required above the fourth storey.

Development and Site Design

Site and Building Design

The proposed development is a stepped back, six-storey multi-residential building consisting of a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. A total of 150 residential units are proposed. The development also includes the conservation and upgrades to the Hillhurst Baptist Church, which occupies the eastern portion of the site as it flanks the 10 Street NW Main Street.

The building design utilizes the unique shape of the site to create a building with two courtyard spaces along Gladstone Road NW, as seen in Figure 1, below. This design breaks up the massing along the front of the building while allowing courtyards to maximize sun exposure for the interior units. The courtyards include common amenity spaces along with private amenity spaces for ground-oriented units. Common amenities include a small playground feature and an outdoor gathering area.

Figure 1: View of development from Gladstone Road NW



The northern elevation of the building, which faces the rear lane, features units with at-grade individual entrances and orientation to provide building activation along the length of the lane, as seen in Figure 2, below. The lane will be upgraded as part of the development requirements and redeveloped with coloured concrete to signal a shared pedestrian and vehicular space. These design features at the rear of the building are complemented by building articulation and varied building materials, which establishes a consistent façade rhythm that creates visual interest and breaks up the overall massing of the building. Combined, the features in the lane will create an attractive and inviting space that is much more than a service corridor.

Figure 2: View of development from north lane



The eastern portion of the building consists of a mix of materials that includes a silhouette of the historic church on the façade to draw a connection between the church and new building that will sit beside it. The western elevation employs building articulation, a mix of materials and a building stepback above the fifth floor.

At the northwest corner of the building, shown in Figure 3 below, stepbacks are employed above the fourth storey. Providing the stepback in this location will further reduce building massing, particularly in relation to low-density residential development to the west of the subject site. Standard building height rules of the MU-1 base district would require a building stepback above the fifth floor. The building stepback rules that are included in the DC District require stepbacks above the fourth floor in this location, resulting in a building design that is responsive to the surrounding context, comments received from adjacent residents, and the unique shape of the parcel. This approach balances sensitive intensification on the development site while respecting the surrounding built form and context of the immediate area.

Figure 3: View of development from the Northwest



As part of the development, the Hillhurst Baptist Church will see structural and cosmetic improvements that respect its historic character. All improvements have been reviewed by The City's Heritage Planning group and are deemed to maintain the historic architectural character of the building. The developer's intent is to donate the space to a community group, although details of the planned uses of the building are still being finalized. In the interim, the building's existing use of Retail and Consumer service is being maintained. A plaza space is also proposed on the east side of the Hillhurst Baptist Church, which is between the Church and the 10 Street Main Street. This will act as a public gathering and amenity space while providing a transition between the historic church and adjacent development. A condition has been included in the Conditions of Approval requiring that public access to the plaza be provided in perpetuity.

Building Materials

The building utilizes a mix of metal siding, cementitious panels and brick veneer. Several colours of cementitious panels are used to create visual variety on the development. Courtyard spaces use courtyard paving stones while the plaza space uses a mix of concrete and holland stone, which will be used to create concentric bands in the plaza area.

Historic Significance

The Hillhurst Baptist Church was built in 1907 in a Gothic Revival architectural style. It is one of the only remaining wood churches from the era. The building was used as a church until the 1970's and has since been used for a range of commercial uses. The building's gabled roof, corner tower and pointed windows are elements of Gothic Revival architecture that feature prominently on the building. The Church is included on The City's Inventory of Historic

Resources, which means that it has been identified as a site of historical significance and, for that reason, conservation of the building is encouraged.

Urban Design Review Panel

The Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) reviewed the application upon its initial submission and provided comments. UDRP identified several concerns at the initial review of the application related to limiting distances, potential privacy concerns between units that look into internal courtyards, as well as the interface between the development and the Hillhurst Baptist Church.

In response to UDRP's comments, the applicant addressed limiting distance concerns by relocating firewalls and reducing unprotected openings, amended orientation and layout of units to mitigate privacy concerns, and has also created a stronger connection between the church and development by projecting a silhouette of the church onto the building and providing thoughtful landscaping between the two buildings. Amended plan submissions have been reviewed by City Wide Urban Design and deemed to adequately address feedback from UDRP. A summary of the UDRP comments and applicant response can be found in Attachment 5.

Transportation

A Transportation Impact Assessment was not required as part of this development permit as the density in the development has not increased from previous proposals on the subject site. Vehicular access to underground parking and loading will be from the rear lane. The proposed development includes 140 residential parking stalls, at a ratio of 0.93 stalls per unit. This ratio slightly exceeds the parking minimum of 0.75 stalls per unit required in the MU-1 base district. The development also includes 15 visitor parking spaces and five parking spaces for commercial uses within the Hillhurst Baptist Church building. The proposal includes 114 Class 1 bicycle parking stalls within the parkade and 15 Class 2 bike parking (bike racks) outside of the building. The bike parking requirements, as proposed at 0.76 stalls per unit, exceed that required in the Land Use Bylaw.

A transit stop, served by Route 4 (primary transit) and Route 104, is located on 10 Street NW approximately 120 metres from the subject site. The site is also located within approximately 150 metres walking distance to the Sunnyside LRT Station.

As part of the development permit process, lane upgrading will be required to ensure proper laneway function is maintained, while also establishing it as a safe and inviting space. This includes lane widening to facilitate two-way traffic and accommodate vehicle turning radii, utilizing coloured concrete to signal that the lane is to be shared with vehicles and other modes, as well as paving and other improvements as deemed necessary. Additionally, curb bulbs at the intersection of 10 Street NW and Gladstone Road NW are included with the proposed development to improve pedestrian circulation and safety.

Environmental Site Considerations

A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was submitted and reviewed by Administration. Administration accepts the findings of the assessment.

Utilities and Servicing

Public water, sanitary and storm sewer mains exist in the adjacent public rights-of-way for development servicing purposes. Relevant studies have been provided that confirm capacity exists to service the proposed development. Detailed development servicing will be determined at the Development Site Servicing Plan stage.

Waste and Recycling

A waste and recycling room is proposed on the main floor of the development. Waste and recycling pick-up would be accessed from the rear lane.

Legislation and Policy

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (2014)

The recommendation by Administration in this report has considered, and is aligned with, the policy direction of the [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#) which directs population growth in the region to cities and towns, and promotes the efficient use of land.

Interim Growth Plan (2018)

The recommendation aligns with the policy direction of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board's [Interim Growth Plan](#) (IGP). The proposed development builds on the principles of the IGP by promoting efficient use of land and regional infrastructure, and establishing strong, sustainable communities.

Municipal Development Plan (Statutory – 2009)

The subject site is located within the Residential Developed - Inner City area identified on Map 1: Urban Structure of the [Municipal Development Plan \(MDP\)](#). It is also adjacent to a Neighbourhood Main Street. The Inner City area comprises residential communities that primarily feature a grid road network, older housing stock in the form of low to moderate housing densities and a finer mix of land uses along many of the edge streets.

The proposed development is in alignment with the MDP direction for the Inner City and Main Streets. These sections include policies focused on providing an appropriate transition in building scale between the Main Street and adjacent areas. The development proposes a built form that respects the scale of the community through modest intensification, while providing a building height and density that steps down from that seen on the Main Street and development to the west of the site.

The proposal aligns with other MDP Main Street policies, which focus on land use, mobility and public realm. It incorporates built form elements to support Main Street policies such as street-oriented buildings, south facing plazas and improvements to pedestrian conditions/facilities between the Main Street and adjacent community.

The MDP also includes policy that encourages the conservation, enhancement and adaptive reuse of identified heritage resources. The application's proposal to protect, upgrade and repurpose the Hillhurst Baptist Church align with this policy direction.

Overall, the proposal contributes to shaping a more compact urban form in alignment with Section 2.2: Shaping a More Compact Urban Form of the MDP. The proposed development would allow for an efficient use of land, contribute to creating walkable neighbourhoods, conserve a heritage resource, contribute to housing diversity and utilize existing transit and infrastructure.

Climate Resilience Strategy (2018)

Administration has reviewed this application against the applicable policies in the [Climate Resilience Strategy](#). The plans include 20 electric vehicle charging stations in the parkade and conduit within the parkade and electrical capacity to the building to provide for an additional 100

EV charging stalls. These additional stalls are considered EV Capable. The building is also planned to have mid-high efficiency mechanical systems and building envelope, which targets at least 15 percent better energy efficiency than the [National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings](#) (2015). Additionally, by maintaining the Hillhurst Baptist Church building, the project will reduce the amount of construction materials entering the landfill.

Redevelopment of this scale (150 units) in close proximity to frequent transit, will enable increased use of public transit, as well as walking and cycling that can significantly contribute to greenhouse gas reduction at the neighbourhood scale. The transit-oriented nature of the proposal is complemented by the provision of indoor secure bicycle storage, which is in excess of that required in the Land Use Bylaw. These measures encourage alternate modes of transportation and reduce vehicle use that lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Transit Oriented Development Policy Guidelines (Non-Statutory – 2004)

The [Transit Oriented Development Policy Guidelines](#) provide direction for the development of areas typically within 600 metres of a Transit Station. The Guidelines encourage the type of development that creates a higher density, walkable, mixed-use environment within station areas to optimize use of existing transit infrastructure, create mobility options for Calgarians, and benefit local communities and city-wide transit riders alike. The proposed development meets key policy objectives of the Guidelines, specifically that of increasing density around transit stations.

Hillhurst/Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan (Statutory – 1988)

The subject site is included in the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Area of the [Hillhurst/Sunnyside Area Redevelopment Plan](#) (ARP) which was updated in 2009. The TOD area is noted to have a high potential for future intensification. The proposal aligns with the intent of the TOD area by allowing for greater housing choice, maximizing existing transit infrastructure and locating residential development in close proximity to goods and services. The ARP encourages intensification along Gladstone Road NW. Specifically, the ARP is supportive of larger development on irregularly shaped parcels along this street. As the proposal is on an irregularly shaped site fronting Gladstone Road NW, the proposal is in keeping with this policy.

Minor amendments to the ARP to enable the proposed development were approved with the recently approved land use amendment on the subject site. The amendments allow for a modest increase in the allowable height and density on the western portion of the site, increasing the maximum building height from 16 metres to 20 metres, and decreasing the maximum allowable height on the east side of the site. Effectively, the ARP amendment shifted the built form on the site from a tower on podium type of development which would have concentrated most of the intensity in the same space as the Historic Church to mid-rise across the site. Previously, the ARP included a maximum building height of 32 metres on the eastern portion of the site, which would allow for a building of approximately 10 storeys. With the approved amendments, a maximum building height of 20 metres (a maximum of six storeys) is enabled across the whole site.

Section 3.1.5 of the ARP includes provisions for providing bonus density within the TOD area, with one of the methods for achieving additional density being through historic resource designation. The Hillhurst Baptist Church is noted as a Heritage Site in the ARP and, as such, proposed upgrades and heritage designation of the building allow for additional density on the development site.

Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 and Direct Control District (Bylaw 121D2021)

Administration has reviewed the application against DC [121D2021](#) and the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007. The table below notes proposed relaxations. Administration has reviewed each relaxation individually and considers each relaxation to be acceptable for the reasons outlined in the table below.

Bylaw Relaxations			
Regulation	Standard	Provided	Administration Rationale Supporting a Relaxation
1374 Setback Areas (min.)	(2) Where the parcel shares a property line: (b) with a lane that separates the parcel from a parcel designated as a residential district or mixed use district, the setback area must have a min depth of 7.5m measured from the property line that the adjacent parcel designated as a residential district or mixed use district shares with the lane;	Plans indicate the north setback area, when measured to the balcony, as being 7.30 m (-0.20 m).	<i>This is considered a minor relaxation of balconies along the north lane. Administration supports a relaxation on this item to allow for greater articulation on the north side of the building. Articulation is achieved by allowing the balconies to project slightly beyond the building façade.</i>
1334 Projections into Setback Areas	(1) Unless otherwise referenced in subsections (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8) a building or air conditioning units must not be located in any setback area.	Plans indicate north portions of the proposed building as being within the setback areas.	<i>Administration supports a minor relaxation on this item to allow for greater articulation on the north side of the building. This relaxation is related to the above setback area relaxation, whereby balconies project into the north setback area by 0.2 metres.</i>